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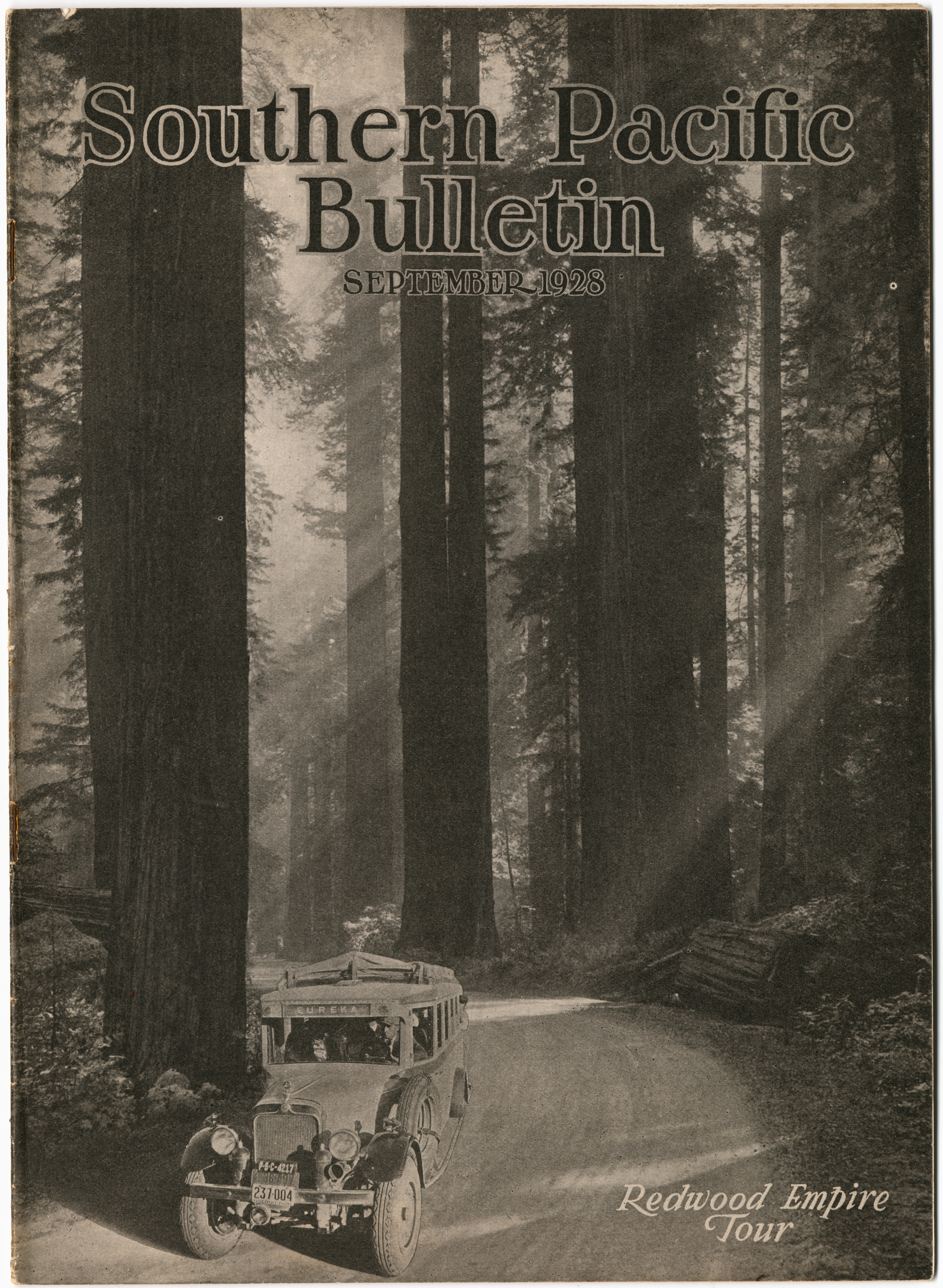

Redwood Empire Tour

California Grapes Go to Market

By Leo C. Monahan

Manager of Grower and Public Relations
California Vinyardists' Association

TRAIN after train of trim Pacific Fruit Express reefers are rolling to Roseville to begin their long run during which every car will cover an average of 6,000 miles before again being hooked behind a fruit tramp for another "spot." That is California's grape crop going to market.

Last season during the September peak 1800 cars of grapes rolled daily from 253 stations in California. Is it any wonder that the main line of Southern Pacific from Fresno over the "hump" to Ogden has been dubbed the "hottest piece of track in the United States"? A total of 74,000 cars of grapes were transported under refrigeration to Eastern points during the short space of four months during 1927. Hooked up end to end in one fruit bloc they would constitute a train approximately 650 miles long with the caboose in San Francisco and the head end reaching into Montello, Nevada. In addition to regular P. F. E. equipment thousands of foreign reefers are deadheaded to California to do the job.

This annual movement has grown in ten years from 16,358 cars. But this spectacular increase in shipments has unfortunately been accompanied by unwelcome price declines which have reduced the farm value of grapes from $348.00 to $76.00 per acre—leaving the producer small profits, if any, for his labor.

A year ago grape growers organized themselves into the California Vineyardists' Association and now over 12,000 are participating, under the leadership of Donald D. Conn, in a program to bring about better marketing of their product and to increase their returns to profitable levels. Trade promotion is one of the many features of this service organization, and this year a determined effort will be made to obtain a greater share of the consumer's dollar by advertising the slogan "Eat California Grapes—Keep Well" during National Grape Week, September 23-29.

Hotels, restaurants, and dining cars are being urged to serve California grapes regularly and dealers will be given every possible aid in the program of stimulating consumer desire for the product. California growers will back up their campaign with high quality fruit at prices within the reach of everyone to the end that eastern folks may enjoy better grapes oftener and, having once partaken of this leading California fruit, will eagerly await its arrival each season during the years to come.

This season the Pacific Fruit Express Company had more than 40,000 refrigerator freight cars of its own available for shippers of perishables from the West.

From California vineyards to Eastern markets more than 74,000 cars of grapes moved over western rails last season. The cars would have made up a train more than 650 miles long, reaching from San Francisco to Montello, Nevada.

The race is getting healthier, authorities say—but not the race to the railroad crossing.—Ex.

"Did the doctor remove your appendix?"

"Feels to me like he removed my whole table of contents."—Octopus.

San Jose Traffic People "Make Merry" at Outing

Under the auspices of the district traffic offices at San Jose an enjoyable "get together" outing was held at the beautiful grounds of the Montezuma School for Boys located in the mountains near Los Gatos on Sunday, July 15. Agents and employes on the district, together with their families, were invited and about 125 attended.

Prize contests, games and sports occupied the afternoon period and were enjoyed to the fullest extent. A baseball game between the Freight and Passenger departments resulted in a 15-to-7 victory for the freight representatives.

Arrangements were handled by general committee consisting of E. Shillingsburg, L. B. Stevenson, C. C. Fischer, and J. C. Moore for Freight Department; and Geo. B. Hanson, A. A. Hapgood, J. H. Larkey, and H. E. Hinshaw for Passenger Department. Ladies committee consisted of Mesdames Hanson, Stevenson, Larkey, and McCarley.

Commuter Has Fine Things to Say About Peninsula Service

Satisfaction with the suburban train service Southern Pacific is providing points on the Peninsula south of San Francisco, is expressed by H. Gremmer in a recent letter thanking the Company for the prompt settlement of a refund matter.

"I feel that more of us should tell you that there is a general appreciation of the normally good service we receive," he wrote Passenger Traffic Manager F. S. McGinnis. "The cars are always clean, the light is very satisfactory for evening reading, the attitude of the conductors is admirable, and the adherence to time schedules is most commendable. I take pleasure in expressing this opinion, for I realize that it is a difficult matter to obtain these results as a normal program."